ED 423 091 NON-WESTERN EDUCATIONAL TRADITIONS: ALTERNATIVE APPROACHES TO EDUCATIONAL THOUGHT AND PRACTICE. SOCIOCULTURAL, POLITICAL, AND ...

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REAGAN, TIMOTHY

96 195P.

DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 423 091 RC 021 641

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TITLE	Non-Western Educational Traditions: Alternative Approaches to Educational Thought and Practice. Sociocultural, Political, and Historical Studies in Education.
ISBN	ISBN-0-8058-8041-0
PUB DATE	1996-00-00
NOTE	195p.
AVAILABLE FROM	Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 10 Industrial Avenue, Mahwah, NJ 07430 ($17.50).
PUB TYPE	Books (010) -- Historical Materials (060)
EDRS PRICE	Document Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS	African Culture; American Indian Culture; American Indian Education; Beliefs; Buddhism; Chinese Culture; Cultural Influences; Educational History; *Educational Philosophy; *Educational Practices; Educational Principles; Foreign Countries; Islamic Culture; *Non Western Civilization; *Nonformal Education; Oral Tradition; *Sociocultural Patterns; Values
IDENTIFIERS	Aztec (People); Hinduism; *Indigenous Knowledge Systems

ABSTRACT

The history of education, as taught in the United States and in the West generally, has focused primarily on how Western educational tradition emerged. This book provides a brief overview of several non-Western approaches to educational thought and practice. An understanding of how other peoples have educated their children, as well as what counted as "education" for them, may clarify Western assumptions and values and provide alternative viewpoints about important educational matters. Nine chapters deal with a wide variety of non-Western cultural and historical educational traditions. Chapter 1 presents a theoretical foundation for the study of non-Western educational traditions. Chapters 2-8 examine traditional, indigenous African educational thought and practice; Aztec education as a case study of indigenous education in Mesoamerica; the pre-Columbian North American Indian experience of education; educational thought and practice in imperial China, with emphasis on the role of the examination system; the Hindu educational tradition in India; the Buddhist educational tradition; and the Muslim educational heritage. Chapter 9 summarizes major themes and issues: the distinction between formal schooling and education, community-based education in which all adults are teachers, education as socialization, emphasis on vocational training, the ultimate responsibility of the family, oral language skills and oral tradition, and values and spirituality. Each chapter contains references, questions for reflection and discussion, and recommendations for further reading. Contains a 27-page bibliography and an index. (TD)

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